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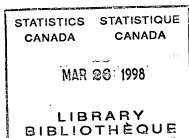
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**WOMEN AND
THE LABOUR FORCE**

Canada





1986 Census of Canada

WOMEN AND THE LABOUR FORCE



by M. Patricia Connelly and Martha MacDonald

Published under the authority of the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion.

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PREFACE

The 1986 Census of Canada provided, as did all the previous censuses, a rich source of information on individual, family and household characteristics of Canadians. The census data allow individual researchers as well as academic, business, cultural, social and governmental organizations to undertake in-depth enquiries and analyses on those social issues which interest and concern them.

This study is part of the 1986 Focus on Canada Series. The series is a modest effort by Statistics Canada to provide overviews of a wide variety of subjects on which the 1986 Census collected information. The studies have been written by experts, both inside and outside Statistics Canada, in non-technical language supported by simple tables and attractive charts. The topics include demographic characteristics (population, families, farmers, youth, seniors, the disabled), socio-cultural characteristics (ethnicity, language, education), and economic characteristics (women in the labour force, affordability of housing, occupational trends, employment income, family income).

The present study on "Women and the Labour Force" was contracted out to the Institute for Research on Public Policy and was authored by Professors M. Patricia Connelly and Martha MacDonald of St. Mary's University for the Institute.

I would like to express my appreciation to the authors, to the reviewers and to the staff of the Bureau involved in managing and producing this series.

We hope that the studies in the Focus on Canada Series will not only provide Canadians with very useful information on various facets of Canadian society, but will also be an inducement for them to undertake further research on the topics.

Ivan P. Fellegi
Chief Statistician of Canada

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
HIGHLIGHTS	7
INTRODUCTION	9
Chapter 1. Women and the Labour Force	11
Composition of the Labour Force	13
Labour Force Participation	13
Regional Variation	13
Age and Education	17
Marital Status	17
Presence of Children	18
Income of Husband/Partner	18
Chapter 2. Characteristics of Women's Work	21
Industry and Occupation Concentration	22
Industry	22
Occupation	22
Employment Income	24
Part-time Work	27
Unemployment and Non-participation in the Labour Force	28
CONCLUSION	33

TABLE OF CONTENTS - Concluded

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
1. Labour Force Participation Rates of Women By Age and Education, Canada, 1986 . .	17
2. Labour Force Participation Rates of Women With Children Living at Home by Age and Number of Children at Home and Husband/Partner Present, Canada, 1986	19
3. Labour Force Participation Rates of Women With Husband/Partner Present, by Husband's Income in 1985 and Presence and Age of Children Living at Home, Canada, 1986	19
4. Percentage Distribution of the Employed Labour Force by Sex and Industry Divisions, Canada, 1971, 1981 and 1986	21
5. Distribution (Number and Percentage) of Employed Labour Force by Occupation and Sex, Canada, 1971 and 1986	23
6. Occupations With the Largest Increase in Numbers of Employed Women, Canada, 1971-1986	24
7. Average Employment Income in Constant (1985) Dollars of Individuals Who Worked Full Year, Full Time by Sex and Occupation, Canada, 1970, 1980 and 1985	25
8. Ratio Between Average Employment Incomes of Females and Males Who Worked Full Year, Full Time by Level of Schooling, Canada, 1970, 1980 and 1985	26
9. Women Who Worked Mostly Part-time Weeks by Occupation, Canada, 1985	27
10. Percentage of Women Who Worked in 1985 Mostly Part-time Weeks by Family Status and Presence of Children	28
11. Duration of Unemployment by Sex, Marital Status and Age, Annual Averages, Canada, 1986	29
12. Women Who Have Worked on a Regular Basis Who Have Had Work Interruptions of at Least One Year by Number of Work Interruptions and Number of Children, Canada, 1984	29
13. Percentage Distribution of Women Who Had Work Interruptions of at Least One Year by Reason for Interruption, Canada, 1984	29
14. Female Population 15 Years of Age and Over Not in the Labour Force, With Children at Home, by Age and by Number of Children at Home	31

LIST OF CHARTS

1. Percentage Distribution of Female Labour Force by Education, Canada, 1986	14
2. Percentage Distribution of Female Labour Force by Age, Canada, 1986	15
3. Percentage Distribution of Female Labour Force by Marital Status, Canada, 1986 . . .	16

HIGHLIGHTS

- In 1986 over half of all Canadian women (55.9%) were in the labour force and the majority of these women were married.
- The labour force participation of married women rose from 37% in 1971 to 57.4% in 1986.
- Never-married women (65.2%) were only somewhat more likely to participate in the labour force than married women.
- Well over half (60.6%) of all women in private households with children living at home were in the labour force.
- Women who are lone parents with only pre-school children had a participation rate of 58.6%.
- Women with only pre-school age children and husbands living at home had a participation rate of 62.1%.
- Of those women in the labour force with husbands or partners present, one-third (34.1%) had husbands or partners whose total income in 1985 was less than \$20,000 and 60.1% had husbands or partners whose income was less than \$30,000.
- The concentration of women in trade and community, business, and personal service industries increased from 55.7% in 1971 to 61.6% in 1986.
- The concentration of women in clerical, sales and service occupations increased from 55.0% in 1971 to 58.1% in 1986.
- Both in 1971 and 1986, the three occupations in which the most women were employed were secretaries, bookkeepers and salespersons.
- Women's share of managerial employment increased from 15.5% in 1971 to 31.5% in 1986.
- Average earnings of women (\$19,995) who worked full year, full time, in 1985 were just 66% that of men (\$30,504) who were employed full year, full time. This was an improvement over 1970 when the ratio was 60%.
- The extent of part-time work for women increased from 29% of women who worked in 1970 to 32.6% in 1985.
- Two-thirds of all part-time workers in 1985 were women.
- Women had a higher unemployment rate than men in 1986 (11.2% compared with 9.6%).
- Of the 1.7 million women not in the labour force with children at home, only 19% had never been employed and 56.6% of these were over 45 years of age.

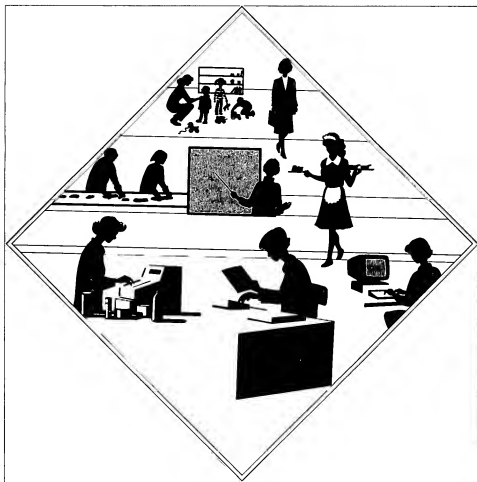
INTRODUCTION

In Canada, women comprise a significant part of the labour force, but they neither occupy as many occupations nor do they earn the same incomes as men. Despite some improvement in recent years, most women remain concentrated in relatively few occupations such as clerical, sales and service jobs, where incomes are low and opportunities for advancement are few. In addition to their work in the labour force, married women continue to be responsible for child care and household work. The combination of household work and labour force participation is even more difficult for the ever growing number of female lone parents.

This study focuses on recent trends in women's work in the labour market. This is not because women's labour force participation is more important than women's domestic work. It is because there is a wealth of data collected in the 1986 Census that allows an examination of this work. The work done by women in the home cannot be explored with these data; therefore, our attention to it is necessarily limited.

This report provides a descriptive analysis of women's labour force participation, employment conditions and unemployment as revealed by 1986 Census data. Comparisons are made with previous censuses and to some extent other Statistics Canada data sources such as the Labour Force Survey and the 1984 Family History Survey are used. Although most of the data are at the Canada level, this paper does try to give some sense of the provincial variation in women's labour force experience.

WOMEN AND THE LABOUR FORCE



WOMEN AND THE LABOUR FORCE

To be fully understood, women's relationship to the labour force must be examined from two angles. The first is to examine the **composition** of the labour force, that is, the way in which women who are in the labour force are distributed according to such factors as age, marital status and husband's income. This provides a profile of the existing female labour force. The second is to examine women's labour force **participation rates**, that is, the percentage of women 15 years of age and over who are employed or looking for employment. This provides a picture of which women are likely to be in the labour force.

Composition of the Labour Force

The labour force participation of women is increasing and their attachment to the labour force appears to be more constant than ever before.

The 1986 Census shows that over half of the female labour force have more than a high school education (Chart 1) and over half are between the ages of 25-44 years (Chart 2). The majority of women in the labour force were married (61.0%) with only 27.9% who had never married (Chart 3). Close to half (47.8%) of the women in the labour force who live in private households have children at home.

There are indications that most women are working to support themselves and others. A total of 39.4% of all women in the labour force do not have husbands or partners present and are presumably self-supporting and 18.5% of these women are lone parents. Of those with husbands or partners present, one-third have husbands or partners whose total income was less than \$20,000 and 60.1% had husbands or partners whose income was less than \$30,000 in 1985 (Table 3).

Labour Force Participation

Since the 1950s the participation of women in the Canadian labour force has steadily increased. In 1951, slightly less than one-quarter (24.1%) of all Canadian women were in the labour force. By 1971 this figure had risen to 39.9%, and by 1986 over half (55.4%) of all women 15 years and over were employed or looking for employment. During these years the male labour force participation rate remained relatively stable, ranging from 76.4% in 1971 to 77.0% in 1986. By 1986, 5.6 million women and 7.5 million men were in the labour force. This is an increase of 85.2% for women compared with 30.0% for men over a 15-year period.¹

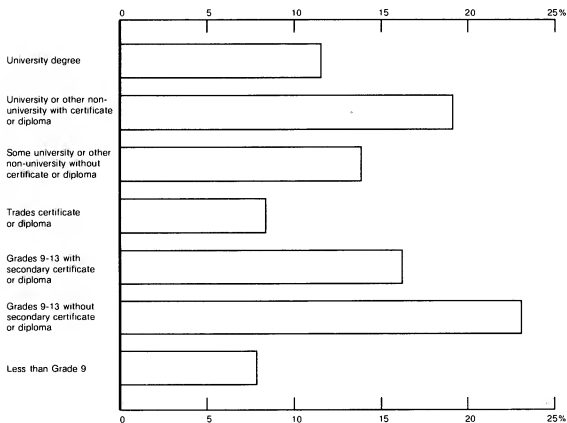
Regional Variation

In 1986, 50% or more of all women in most Canadian provinces and territories were employed or looking for employment. Fifty-nine per cent of women in Ontario and 51.3% in Quebec were in the labour force. In the Atlantic region, the rate was 56.4% in Prince Edward Island and approximately 50% in Nova Scotia (50.1%), New Brunswick (49.9%), and Newfoundland (48.4%). In the West, the highest participation rate was in Alberta (62.5%) and the lowest in Saskatchewan (55.1%). Manitoba had a female labour force participation rate of 56.2% and British Columbia had a rate of 55.5%. The Yukon (72.4%) and Northwest Territories (61.7%) both had high participation rates for women. In every Canadian province and territory women in urban areas were more likely to be in the labour force (57.2%) than women in rural areas (51.1%), perhaps reflecting differences in job opportunities and work demands in the home.

¹ For historical comparability, the labour force data included in this paragraph are based on 1971 labour force concepts.

Chart 1.

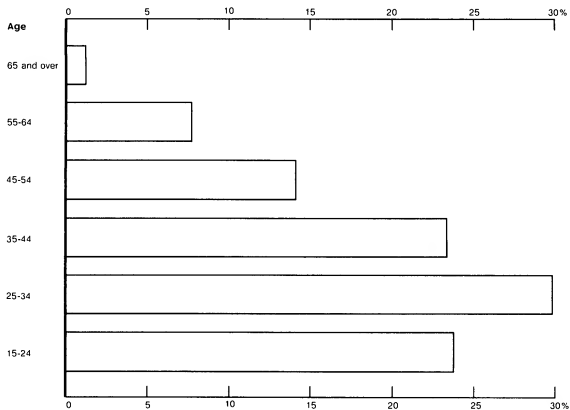
Percentage Distribution of Female Labour Force by Education, Canada, 1986



Source:
1986 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

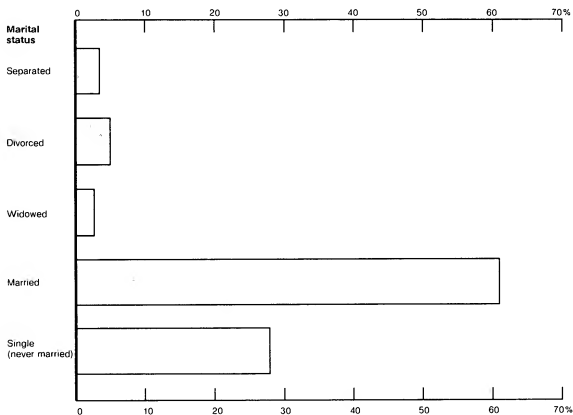
Chart 2.

Percentage Distribution of Female Labour Force by Age, Canada, 1986



Source:
1986 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

Chart 3.**Percentage Distribution of Female Labour Force by Marital Status, Canada, 1986**



Source:
1986 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

Table 1. Labour Force Participation Rates of Women by Age and Education, Canada, 1986

Education	Age groups							
	Total	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over
	%							
Total	55.9	45.6	80.9	73.7	72.2	62.7	36.2	4.7
Less than Grade 9	24.8	21.5	46.5	46.6	50.5	44.4	24.0	2.7
Grade 9-13 without certificate or diploma	46.4	35.5	67.6	61.5	66.0	59.5	35.2	4.4
Grade 9-13 with certificate or diploma	63.3	60.1	83.2	71.8	71.4	65.7	40.0	6.4
Trades certificate or diploma	69.7	74.7	87.7	77.1	76.6	73.0	48.3	7.7
Some university or other non-university without certificate or diploma	68.7	74.7	83.3	76.4	76.0	71.1	45.8	7.0
University or other non-university with certificate or diploma	74.9	77.1	89.9	84.1	81.5	77.2	53.4	8.3
University degree	81.3	73.7	87.9	86.7	85.0	84.9	62.4	15.3

Source:

1986 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

Age and Education

Does age and education make a difference to women's labour force participation? Between 1971 and 1986 labour force participation increased for women of all ages except those aged 65 and over. Labour force participation rates for women still vary considerably by age. The 1986 Census (Table 1) showed participation rates are highest in the 20-24 year age group, gradually declining until age 55, when the rate drops sharply. Throughout the childbearing years (20-44), however, the rate remains over 70%.

In general, the more education a woman has the more likely she is to be in the labour force. In 1986, only 24.8% of those with less than Grade 9 education were in the labour force compared with 81.3% of those with a university degree (Table 1). Participation rates varied less by age among women with university degrees than among those with other educational levels. This likely had to do with the types of jobs available to women with higher education.

Women in the older age categories (where participation drops off) tended to have less education than women in the 20-44 age group. For example,

only 3% of the women in the 20-24 age group had less than Grade 9 education compared with 35% in the 55-64 age group. As the younger, more educated women mature, the labour force participation rates in the older categories will likely increase.

Marital Status

The majority of women in 1986 were in the labour force, regardless of their marital status. The exception was widows (15.7%) who were, for the most part, in the older age category. Divorced and separated women had the highest labour force participation rates (68.4% and 66.1%) followed by never-married women (65.2%) and married women (57.2%). If widows are omitted, the range in participation rates by marital status was less than 12 percentage points.

Between 1971 and 1986, the largest increase in female labour force participation took place among married women; in 1971, their participation rate was 37% and by 1986 it had risen almost 20 percentage points to 57.4%.²

² See Footnote 1.

Today, many households have two or more income earners. When married women (which include those in a common-law relationship) are the second earner, they usually do their paid work in addition to the unpaid domestic work in their home,³ resulting in what has been referred to as the "double day" for women.

Presence of Children

For many women, entering the labour force means they must consider child care. According to the 1986 Census, well over half of all women in private households with children living at home were in the labour force (60.6%). This was actually higher than the participation rate of women with no children at home (52.3%), many of whom were older.

The 1986 Census shows that an increasing number of women with pre-school children are in the labour force. The labour force participation rate of those with pre-school children only and a husband/partner present increased from 36.5% in 1976 to 62.1% in 1986. Among women in lone-parent families, the participation rate of those with only pre-school children increased from 48.5% in 1976 to 59.2% in 1986.⁴

In 1986, there were 896,990 women in the labour force with at least one child under 6 years. The number of children involved is 1,173,780 and of this number 445,530 were under age 2. A 1984 study estimated that there were only 172,000 child-care spaces in Canada.⁵ As more women with pre-school children enter the labour force, concern over the availability of quality child-care facilities has increased.

Are there differences in the labour force participation rates of women with children in dual-parent families and those in lone-parent families? The 1986 Census shows that the labour force participation rate of women with children at home and husbands or

partners present (61.2%) was higher than the rate for women who were heading lone-parent families (57.7%) (Table 2). But, it is important to note that of all women who worked in 1985, more of those with children living at home in dual-parent families worked part time than did those who were lone parents or in a common-law relationship (Table 10).

Looking at the number of children living at home, the highest participation rate was among women with two children for both lone-parent families and dual-parent families. In both cases, the participation rate for women with children remained relatively high until there were four or more children at home (Table 2).

When the age of children is taken into consideration, the participation rates are highest for women with school age children 6-14 years in both lone-parent families and dual-parent families. For those with children under 6 years only, the labour force participation rate drops with each additional child. Women with children living at home probably make a trade-off between the income they can earn in the labour force and the value of their time in the home. This trade-off seems to depend, at least partially, on the number and age of the children.

Income of Husband/Partner

Women's labour force participation rates were high in 1986 regardless of their husband's or partner's income level. Women whose husbands/partners had incomes of less than \$10,000 in 1985 had a participation rate of 46.9%. The rates increased until the partners' income was \$20,000-\$29,999, and decreased very gradually at higher income levels. The general pattern is similar regardless of the age of children living at home (Table 3). But when the presence of children is considered, the decline in the participation rate of women with no children occurs much later, at the \$30,000-\$39,999 level.

³ Andrew S. Harvey, "How Canadians Use Their Time: Implications For Career Counselling" in *Natcon 6* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1983), pages 25-42.

⁴ See Footnote 1.

⁵ *Canadian Social Trends*, Catalogue No. 11-006, Statistics Canada, 1986.

Table 2. Labour Force Participation Rates of Women With Children Living at Home by Age and Number of Children at Home and Husband/Partner Present, Canada, 1986

Number of children at home	Female labour force participation rates	
	Husband present	Lone parents
	%	
Total	61.2	57.7
1	61.3	56.2
2	63.6	62.3
3	58.4	56.5
4 or more	50.9	44.1
Under 6 years only	62.1	58.6
1	69.0	62.7
2	55.0	46.1
3	39.6	29.3
4 or more	36.0	11.8
6-14 years (none under 6, none over 14)	68.0	70.6
1	71.3	74.4
2	69.8	71.6
3	65.1	64.1
4 or more	57.2	48.8
15 years and over only	55.8	49.7
1	51.7	46.4
2	61.5	58.2
3	60.2	56.3
4 or more	51.1	46.5

Source:
1986 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

Table 3. Labour Force Participation Rates of Women With Husband/Partner Present, by Husband's Income in 1985 and Presence and Age of Children Living at Home, Canada, 1986

Husband's income in 1985	Total in Labour force	Female labour force participation rates				
		Total	Children present	No children present	Children under 6 only	Children 6 and over only
	No.			%		
Total	3,367,290	57.3	61.2	50.8	62.1	62.1
Under \$10,000 (including loss and zero income)	451,425	46.9	56.8	38.2	60.6	55.1
\$10,000 - \$19,999	696,590	53.9	61.6	45.4	66.0	60.1
20,000 - 29,999	874,855	63.0	64.6	60.1	65.4	65.3
30,000 - 39,999	698,040	62.0	61.6	62.9	59.5	64.6
40,000 - 49,999	349,390	60.3	60.4	60.0	55.3	64.4
50,000 - 59,999	136,785	57.5	58.3	55.1	53.7	61.5
60,000 and over	160,205	54.9	56.8	50.2	56.6	58.0

Source:
1986 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN'S WORK

While men in the labour force do a variety of jobs, women continue to be concentrated in a few relatively low-paying occupations. By concentration, we mean that women are overrepresented in a few occupations and underrepresented in most, relative to their overall share of employment. For example, in 1986 women constituted 42.6% of the employed labour force but they made up 61.1% of the employed labour force in community, business and personal service industries and only 10.7% of the employed labour force in construction (Table 4). Whereas no more than 21.1% of all employed men are in any one industry, 44.6% of all employed women are in community, business and personal services (Table 4). This trend is changing, but very slowly.

To examine the characteristics of women's work in the labour force, this section focuses only on women who are employed, rather than all those in the labour force. The characteristics of women who are unemployed and women who have never been in the labour force are examined later.

It should be noted that, whenever labour force activity is referenced with either industry or occupation in this report, the 1971 labour force concepts and definitions are used. For that reason, counts will not agree with previously published labour force estimates for the census years concerned. Similarly, for purposes of historical comparability, all occupation counts are based on the 1971 Occupational Classification Manual and all industry counts are based on the 1970 Standard Industrial Classification Manual.

Table 4. Percentage Distribution of the Employed Labour Force by Sex and Industry Divisions, Canada, 1971, 1981 and 1986

Industry	1971			1981			1986		
	Male	Female	% female	Male	Female	% female	Male	Female	% female
		%			%			%	
Total	100.0	100.0	34.3	100.0	100.0	40.1	100.0	100.0	42.6
Agriculture	6.8	3.9	23.1	5.3	2.5	23.8	5.2	2.7	27.6
Forestry	1.1	0.1	4.9	1.0	0.2	11.4	1.0	0.2	13.6
Fishing and trapping	0.4	0.0	3.5	0.4	0.1	8.3	0.5	0.1	12.9
Mines (including milling), quarries and oil wells	2.3	0.3	6.7	2.5	0.6	14.2	2.0	0.5	15.5
Manufacturing industries	23.0	13.2	23.1	22.6	12.4	26.9	21.1	11.2	28.3
Construction industry	8.6	0.9	5.0	9.1	1.4	9.6	8.3	1.3	10.7
Transportation, communication and other utilities	9.9	3.9	16.8	10.2	4.7	23.4	10.1	4.5	24.9
Trade	14.3	15.5	36.2	15.6	17.5	42.8	16.2	17.0	43.7
Finance, insurance and real estate	3.2	6.3	50.9	3.5	8.1	60.6	3.8	7.7	60.2
Community, business and personal service industries	15.4	40.1	57.7	18.8	42.2	60.0	21.1	44.6	61.1
Public administration and defence	8.6	5.6	25.5	8.0	6.8	36.3	8.0	7.0	39.2
Industry unspecified or undefined	6.4	10.1	44.9	2.8	3.4	44.5	2.8	3.1	44.9

Source:
1971, 1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada, unpublished data.

Industry and Occupation Concentration

Industry

Despite the rapid influx of women into the labour force over the years, women remain concentrated in a few industries. In 1971, 55.7% of women were employed in trade and community, business and personal service industries; by 1986, this concentration had increased to 61.6% (Table 4). The corresponding figures for men are 29.6% in 1971 and 37.2% in 1986. As expected, the percentage of women in all industries has increased, given the higher entrance rate of women into the labour force. Between 1971 and 1986, the female proportion of the employed labour force increased by 8.3 percentage points from 34.3% in 1971 to 42.6% in 1986 (Table 4).

As Table 4 shows, there have been some large gains for women in predominantly male industries such as forestry, fishing, construction, and mining. The number of women employed in these industries, however, remains small. For example, between 1971 and 1986 the share of women in mining more than doubled but this increase only represented 16,100 additional jobs for women out of the more than two million jobs women gained during that time period. Also over half of the 16,100 new jobs for women in the mining industry were in traditionally female clerical occupations. In general, within industries women have remained concentrated in certain occupations. For example, in manufacturing, women make up only 19.0% of managers and 8.3% of machining occupations, whereas they make up 64% of clerical workers and 36% of product fabricating and assembling occupations.

Occupation

As noted above, occupations, like some industries, have tended to be male or female dominated. Although an occupation can be considered dominated by one sex if that sex makes up more than 50% of the occupation, a stronger definition, used in some pay equity legislation, considers an occupation to be dominated by one sex if that sex accounts for at least 70% of employment. The stronger measure has been used in this report, unless otherwise indicated.

If women and men maintain their traditional occupational patterns, then one would expect the percentage of women in each occupation to increase proportionately as the percentage of the female labour force increases. But, if more women enter traditional male jobs, then one would expect the proportion of women in these occupations to increase more dramatically. It is important to recognize, however, that given the original concentration levels, even large percentage gains for women in these male-dominated occupations may do little to alter the overall picture of where most women work. To understand this, one

must examine the occupational distribution of women in terms of both the absolute numbers involved and the percentage changes that have occurred.

When major occupational categories are considered, as seen in Table 5, occupational concentration has increased. In 1971, 55% of employed women were in clerical, sales and service occupations, compared with 58.1% in 1986. These occupations had the largest gains in numbers of women workers over the 15-year period (Table 5). These gains reflect the general growth of the service sector and the continued female dominance of clerical work.

An examination of detailed occupations (unit groups) shows that the 15 occupations with the largest growth in numbers of women from 1971-1986 included mainly traditional female-dominated occupations (Table 6). The list of the top 10 occupations employing the most women changed very little from 1971 to 1986. In 1971 and in 1986 the top three occupations for women were secretaries, bookkeepers and salespersons. Furthermore, the number of occupations that employ at least 70% of women increased from 41 in 1971 to 51 in 1986. On the other hand, with the increase of women's labour force participation, the number of occupations with very low percentages of women decreased. Nevertheless, considering women are 42.6% of the employed labour force their underrepresentation in many occupations is still severe.

Overall, then, most women continue to be employed in the traditional female occupations. But, they have made some gains in their share of employment in the traditional male occupations. In the managerial category, for example, a significant change emerged as women's share of jobs doubled, from 15.4% in 1971 to 31.5% in 1986 (Table 5). This means 249,270 more women had managerial jobs. Even though the gains are large, women are still significantly underrepresented in management in all industries except three: Finance, insurance and real estate; Community, business and personal services; and Agriculture.

The male-dominated occupations that had the most dramatic increases in female share of employment or number of females from 1971 to 1986 were mainly occupations where the initial percentage of women was very low. Even with enormous increases, only a very few, such as veterinarians, optometrists and administrators unique to government, ceased to be male dominated (less than 70% male).

There is another change in occupational concentration that can be noted. Specifically, men made inroads into some female-dominated occupations. From 1971 to 1986, the percentage of women in 20 female-dominated

Table 5. Distribution (Number and Percentage) of Employed Labour Force by Occupation and Sex, Canada, 1971 and 1986

Occupation major groups	Distribution, 1986			Females: percentage of total		Females: change from 1971-1986	
	Total	Male	Female	1986	1971		
	No.	%	%	%	%	No.	%
Total - All occupations	11,569,900	100.0	100.0	42.6	34.3	2,141,600	77.0
Managerial, administrative and related occupations	969,860	10.0	6.2	31.5	15.4	249,270	440.1
Occupations in natural sciences, engineering and mathematics	423,130	5.3	1.5	17.4	7.2	57,475	355.3
Occupations in social sciences and related fields	219,240	1.4	2.5	56.6	36.6	96,515	350.8
Occupations in religion	30,415	0.4	0.1	21.2	15.3	2,895	81.2
Teaching and related occupations	500,165	2.9	6.2	61.3	60.5	98,875	47.7
Occupations in medicine and health	574,220	1.9	9.1	78.4	74.2	213,820	90.5
Artistic, literary, recreational and related occupations	178,265	1.6	1.5	42.1	27.0	55,020	273.9
Clerical and related occupations	2,061,765	6.7	32.9	78.5	68.3	733,945	82.9
Sales occupations	1,169,790	10.2	9.9	41.9	29.6	259,190	112.4
Service occupations	1,425,995	10.2	15.3	52.7	45.8	337,855	81.8
Farming, horticultural and animal husbandry occupations	499,390	5.8	2.3	23.1	20.9	10,760	10.3
Fishing, hunting, trapping and related occupations	34,720	0.5	0.1	7.9	1.9	2,260	470.8
Forestry and logging occupations	58,705	0.8	0.1	7.3	2.3	3,050	243.0
Mining and quarrying including oil and gas field occupations	51,580	0.8	0.0	2.1	0.6	710	202.9
Processing occupations	385,100	4.5	1.8	22.4	17.0	33,450	63.5
Machining and related occupations	244,950	3.4	0.3	6.9	5.4	4,905	40.9
Product fabricating, assembling and repairing occupations	848,550	9.8	3.9	22.9	23.0	56,960	41.6
Construction trades occupations	623,275	9.2	0.3	2.3	0.9	9,970	221.1
Transport equipment operating occupations	412,230	5.7	0.7	7.8	2.4	24,645	320.3
Materials handling and related occupations, n.e.c.	195,415	2.3	0.9	22.3	19.0	8,350	23.7
Other crafts and equipment operating occupations	133,700	1.6	0.6	21.4	11.8	16,440	134.4
Occupations not elsewhere classified	197,730	2.4	0.7	18.6	13.0	17,235	87.8
Occupations not stated	331,710	2.8	3.0	43.8	43.9	-152,025	-51.1

Source:
1986 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

Table 6. Occupations With the Largest Increase in Numbers of Employed Women, Canada, 1971-1986

Detailed occupations	Growth in female employment, 1971-1986		Females: percentage of total	
	No.	%	1971	1986
Total - All occupations	2,141,600	77.0	34.3	42.6
Bookkeepers and accounting clerks	171,640	133.0	67.4	83.7
Secretaries and stenographers	163,665	71.3	97.4	98.8
Tellers and cashiers	134,840	141.5	91.2	90.5
Salespersons, commodities, n.e.c.	129,675	79.8	54.8	56.1
Nurses, graduate, except supervisors	105,905	107.6	95.9	95.2
Waiters, hostesses and stewards, food and beverage	81,605	87.5	83.1	83.1
Electronic data-processing equipment operators	62,550	331.0	73.4	79.7
Receptionists and information clerks	55,260	140.6	92.7	94.0
Accountants, auditors and other financial officers	55,100	364.2	15.0	38.5
Supervisors: sales occupations, commodities	49,615	122.0	16.6	31.9
Baby-sitters	46,175	251.1	96.7	97.2
General office clerks	44,275	59.7	62.1	80.4
Chefs and cooks	41,395	114.4	50.9	48.4
Janitors, charworkers and cleaners	36,095	69.6	32.9	41.7
Barbers, hairdressers and related occupations	32,615	97.3	62.5	80.4

Source:

1971 and 1986 Censuses of Canada, unpublished data.

Employment Income

occupations decreased. These included nurses, dancers, telephone operators, elementary school teachers, cashiers and tellers and waiters/waitresses. Some jobs, like elementary school teachers (82.3% to 80.5% female), are among the higher paying occupations for women.

During this period, there were also 18 occupations with an absolute decrease in the number of women. Some of these may be the result of technological change and, consequently, the way in which women describe their jobs. For example, one of the largest decreases was found for typists and clerk-typists. Most of the 18 categories are declining occupations, where the total numbers of employed decreased for both men and women. In many cases, women lost a disproportionate number of jobs, since the female share decreased along with the number of females.

As women are becoming somewhat better represented in many occupations, the difference between women and men's earnings has been narrowing. But this is happening slowly and research indicates that women who work full year, full time continue to earn on average significantly less than men in the same occupations. Table 7 shows what happened to employment incomes of men and women (full-year, full-time workers) between 1970 and 1985. In 1985, the average earnings of women who worked full year, full time were just 66% of those of their male counterparts. Women's average employment income was \$19,995 compared with \$30,504 for men. This, however, was an improvement over 1970, when women's average employment income was only 60% that of men's (Table 7).

Table 7. Average Employment Income in Constant (1985) Dollars of Individuals Who Worked Full Year, Full Time by Sex and Occupation, Canada, 1970, 1980 and 1985

Occupation	1970			1980			1985		
	Male	Female	Female/ Male	Male	Female	Female/ Male	Male	Female	Female/ Male
	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%
All occupations	25,528	15,298	59.9	30,682	19,571	63.8	30,504	19,995	65.5
Managerial administrative and related occupations	43,736	22,172	50.7	44,891	26,777	59.6	45,170	27,014	59.8
Occupations in natural sciences, engineering and mathematics	32,983	21,640	65.6	37,493	26,351	70.3	37,098	27,207	73.3
Occupations in social sciences and related fields	45,754	22,972	50.2	43,930	25,224	57.4	44,745	25,561	57.1
Occupations in religion	15,424	11,467	74.3	18,190	17,044	93.7	18,865	16,333	86.6
Teaching and related occupations	32,382	22,989	71.0	38,593	29,739	77.1	38,643	30,142	78.0
Occupations in medicine and health	45,699	17,940	39.3	49,017	23,828	48.6	51,757	24,817	47.9
Artistic, literary, recreational and related occupations	28,121	19,609	69.7	28,558	21,936	76.8	28,346	21,500	75.8
Clerical and related occupations	22,371	14,993	67.0	25,081	17,971	71.7	24,725	18,207	73.6
Sales occupations	26,462	12,675	47.9	30,153	17,071	56.6	28,841	17,286	59.9
Service occupations	21,387	10,748	50.3	24,647	13,746	55.8	24,151	13,418	55.6
Farming, horticultural and animal husbandry occupations	12,468	8,203	65.8	19,014	10,764	56.6	16,171	10,032	62.0
Fishing, hunting, trapping and related occupations	16,226	13,550	83.5	22,334	10,892	48.8	23,899	14,240	59.6
Forestry and logging occupations	22,465	12,949	57.6	30,598	22,205	72.6	28,455	16,704	58.7
Mining and quarrying including oil and gas field occupations	26,622	19,146	71.9	34,616	26,693	77.1	35,511	26,694	75.2
Processing occupations	22,961	13,355	58.2	27,148	16,878	62.2	27,338	17,256	63.1
Machining and related occupations	23,902	14,180	59.3	27,501	17,002	61.8	27,071	17,408	64.3
Product fabricating, assembling and repairing occupations	23,138	12,024	52.0	26,457	14,924	56.4	26,127	15,089	57.8
Construction trades occupations	25,477	17,573	69.0	29,467	22,071	74.9	28,062	22,938	81.7
Transport equipment operating occupations	23,211	14,958	64.4	28,300	19,265	68.1	27,756	18,477	66.6
Materials handling and related occupations, n.e.c.	21,999	12,799	58.2	25,768	16,137	62.6	25,659	16,405	63.9
Other crafts and equipment operating occupations	26,193	14,139	54.0	30,022	17,758	59.1	30,487	18,095	59.4
Occupations not elsewhere classified	21,309	13,169	61.8	23,658	16,280	68.8	24,027	17,108	71.2

Source:
1971, 1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada, unpublished data.

In 1985, the average earnings of full-year, full-time female workers ranged from a high of \$30,142 in teaching occupations to a low of \$13,418 in service occupations and \$10,032 in farming jobs. Men's average earnings for that year ranged from \$51,757 in medicine and health occupations to \$16,171 in farming jobs (Table 7). In most occupations, over the 1970-1985 period, women's earned income increased more than men's, although there was great variation in the extent of the increase. Between 1980 and 1985, both men and women experienced low gains, or even losses, in certain categories. On the whole, average employment income of full-year, full-time male workers declined by less than 1% and that of females increased by over 2%. Thus, the overall female to male earnings ratio increased from 63.8% in 1980 to 65.5% in 1985.

In clerical work, where women dominate, the ratio of female to male earnings increased by 7 percentage points between 1970 and 1985 as a result of men in these occupations earning on average \$24,725 while women were earning \$18,207, in 1985. Management and administration, as already noted, is a growing occupation for women. The female/male earnings ratio in this occupation altered from 50.7% in 1970 to 59.8% in 1985, with women earning \$27,014 compared with \$45,170 for men. In medicine and health occupations, full-year, full-time female workers earned 47.9% of what full-year, full-time working men earned, an improvement of 9 percentage points over 1970. Men employed full year, full time in medical and health occupations earned on average \$51,757 compared with women in

those occupations who earned \$24,817. This difference in earnings partially reflects the concentration of women and men in particular occupations within the broader occupational category; for example, more men are doctors while more women are nurses.

It seems clear from looking at occupational growth and incomes that occupations with the largest increases in the number of women are in categories where the employment income is low. For example, in the service occupational category, in which the earnings ratio was 56% in 1985, men earned \$24,151 compared with women's earnings of \$13,418 that year.

Table 8 shows that when age and education are controlled for, female full-year, full-time workers still earn considerably less than men. In most years, the employment income ratio decreases with age (until age 55) perhaps reflecting differences in work experience. When controlling for age, the ratio improves with education. Occupational segregation is likely higher at lower educational levels.

The earnings ratio tended to be lower for older, less educated workers in 1985. But, in the prime age groups (25-44), women with university degrees still earned only between 70% and 80% of their male counterparts' earnings (Table 8). The earnings ratio generally improved over the 15-year period for all age and education groups. But it worsened for those aged 20-24 with university degrees, presumably new graduates. It also worsened for the teenage group — those without university degrees.

Table 8. Ratio Between Average Employment Incomes of Females and Males Who Worked Full Year, Full Time by Level of Schooling, Canada, 1970, 1980 and 1985

Age groups	Education								
	Grades 9-13			Some postsecondary			University degree		
	1970	1980	1985	1970	1980	1985	1970	1980	1985
15 - 19 years	89.3	83.4	84.8	80.6	80.9	76.6	--	--	--
20 - 24 years	73.2	74.0	78.3	80.6	77.1	82.6	95.4	86.5	89.3
25 - 34 years	62.5	67.3	70.0	71.1	72.1	73.8	74.2	78.3	78.8
35 - 44 years	55.5	59.0	62.7	61.4	64.6	67.2	61.2	69.9	71.4
45 - 54 years	55.2	56.7	58.8	59.4	61.5	63.6	57.7	63.2	63.9
55 - 64 years	58.0	60.1	61.5	63.9	64.3	65.0	59.2	64.6	61.7
65 years and over	67.6	65.2	67.2	64.8	68.9	62.8	62.9	62.4	53.0

Source:

1971, 1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada, unpublished data.

Note: The symbol (--) means sample too small for reliable data.

It appears then that a significant difference in the earnings of men and women remained in 1985 for full-year, full-time workers, when controlling for education and age. Another factor which might contribute to this difference is work experience. This is often examined indirectly by relating marital status to earnings, arguing that the earnings gap is higher for married women because family responsibilities often result in interrupted careers, or absenteeism, or inability to do overtime, causing women to accumulate less experience or to be unable to take advantage of established career paths, or even suffer downward occupational mobility. Evidence shows that there was indeed a negative relationship between marital status and earnings.⁶

Part-time Work

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of part-time positions. Part-time work is defined as work with fewer than the normally scheduled weekly hours of work performed by persons

doing similar work. Census data show that the percentage of the employed labour force who worked mainly part time increased from 17.9% in 1970 to 21.4% in 1985. The increase for men during that period was from 11.6% to 12.8%, and for women it was 28.9% to 32.6%. Concerns have been raised about the conditions of work for part-time employees compared to full-time employees. In general, part-time workers are lower paid and lack the same protections and benefits as their full-time counterparts.⁷

Most part-time workers are women. Census data show that in 1970, 58.9% of all part-time workers were women; this increased to two-thirds by 1980 and remained at 66.1% in 1985. Almost 1.9 million women worked part time in 1985 representing one-third (32.6%) of the women who worked in 1985. Not surprisingly, most women who worked part time were concentrated in female-dominated occupations, that is, two-thirds (66.7%) of the women who worked part time worked in clerical, sales or service occupations. Almost half (47.9%) of all women who worked in sales jobs worked part time (Table 9).

Table 9. Women Who Worked Mostly Part-time Weeks by Occupation, Canada, 1985

Occupation	Distribution		Part-time workers as a percentage of all female workers
	No.	%	
Total	1,862,655	100.0	32.6
Managerial administrative and related occupations	53,290	2.9	12.3
Occupations in natural sciences, engineering and mathematics	9,475	0.5	11.7
Occupations in social sciences and related fields	41,550	2.2	27.6
Occupations in religion	1,570	0.1	33.3
Teaching and related occupations	112,915	6.1	32.0
Occupations in medicine and health	192,875	10.4	38.7
Artistic, literary, recreational and related occupations	36,395	2.0	38.6
Clerical and related occupations	573,000	30.8	30.1
Sales occupations	260,665	14.0	47.9
Service occupations	408,235	21.9	43.9
Farming, horticultural and animal husbandry occupations	53,155	2.9	40.3
Fishing, hunting, trapping and related occupations	1,615	0.1	31.5
Forestry and logging occupations	1,915	0.1	28.2
Mining and quarrying including oil and gas field occupations	195	0.0	13.4
Processing occupations	32,285	1.7	27.3
Machining and related occupations	1,965	0.1	9.6
Product fabricating, assembling and repairing occupations	30,860	1.7	12.9
Construction trades occupations	4,065	0.2	20.5
Transport equipment operating occupations	13,840	0.7	36.7
Materials handling and related occupations, n.e.c.	13,760	0.7	23.8
Other crafts and equipment operating occupations	9,195	0.5	26.2
Occupations not elsewhere classified	9,820	0.5	23.3

Source:
1986 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

⁶ "Table 5: Ratio Between Average Employment Incomes and Females and Males Who Worked Full-year, Mostly Full-time, by Marital Status and Age, Canada 1985" *The Daily*, Statistics Canada, Catalogue No. 11-001, April 20, 1988.

⁷ Labour Canada, *Part-time Work in Canada: Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Part-time Work* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1983).

The extent of part-time employment for women in 1985 varied with family status. Part-time work was most common among young women still living in their parents' home, many of whom would likely still be in school. The lowest rate was among women outside families (who by definition do not have children). Women with husbands present were more likely to work part time than women who were lone parents (34.2% compared to 25.5%). Although female common-law partners are usually grouped with wives, the rate of part-time employment in 1985 among them (20.6%) was much closer to female non-family persons (19.6%) than to wives (34.2%). This difference between wives (husband present) and common-law partners remained despite the presence and age of children (Table 10). Of all women who worked part time in 1985, over half (57.4%) were wives with husband present and almost one-quarter (23.1%) were young women aged 15 and over living at home.

The Labour Force Survey asks questions about why people are working part time. In 1985, 351,000 or 27.8% of women working part time said they could only find part-time work, including almost 24.9% of married women. Almost 20% (19.3%) of married women gave "personal or family responsibilities" as their reason for working part time. A further 53.4% of married women working part time said they did not want full-time work. The major reason single women gave for working part time was "going to school" (57.7%) but 30.1% said they could only find part-time work.

When the number of weeks in a year rather than hours in a week are examined, only 61% of men who worked in 1985 and 52.7% of women who worked in 1985 worked a full year; that is, 39% of men and 47.3% of women worked only part year.

Women as well as men in Atlantic Canada and in British Columbia and the Territories had lower rates of full-year employment than in other provinces. When part-time hours per week and part-year work are combined, census figures show that 41.4% of all women who worked in 1985 worked 49-52 weeks mostly full time, and one-quarter worked only 1-26 weeks, half of whom worked part time.

Unemployment and Non-participation in the Labour Force

Many women are looking for employment but are unsuccessful in finding it. In the 1986 Census, the female unemployment rate was 11.2% compared with 9.6% for males. Teenage women, like teenage men, had especially high unemployment rates (20.8% and 20.7%, respectively). The difference between unemployment rates for women and men is more pronounced among those aged 25 and over. Women in the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories had especially high unemployment rates, as did men, reflecting general labour market conditions.

Labour Force Survey data show that the average duration of unemployment for women in 1986 was 18.8 weeks compared with 21.5 weeks for men (Table 11). It seems that women suffer more spells of unemployment of shorter length than do men, given that their overall unemployment rate is higher. This does not necessarily mean they are more likely to find jobs. Research shows that more spells of unemployment for women, compared with men, end by the women dropping out of the labour force.⁸ The average duration of unemployment increases with age for both men and women, regardless of marital status.

Table 10. Percentage of Women Who Worked in 1985 Mostly Part-time Weeks by Family Status and Presence of Children

Family status of women	Presence of children		
	Total	No children present	Children present
Total	32.6	30.1	35.4
Wife, husband present	34.2	25.6	37.8
Common-law partner	20.6	18.8	24.2
Lone parent	25.5	-	25.5
Female child 15 years and over at home	48.9	48.9	-
Non-family person 15 years and over	19.6	19.6	-

Source:
1986 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

⁸ Abrar Hasan and Patrice de Broucker, *Unemployment, Employment, and Non-Participation in Canadian Labour Markets* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1985).

Table 11. Duration of Unemployment by Sex, Marital Status and Age, Annual Averages, Canada, 1986

	Average duration (weeks)	
	Male	Female
Total	21.5	18.8
Married	23.1	18.9
Single (never married)	18.6	16.5
Other	32.2	25.6
15-24 years	15.1	13.8
25-44 years	22.7	20.0
45 years and over	31.0	26.0

Source:

The Labour Force, Statistics Canada, Catalogue No. 71-001, December 1986.

Table 12. Women Who Have Worked on a Regular Basis Who Have Had Work Interruptions of at Least One Year by Number of Work Interruptions and Number of Children, Canada, 1984

Number of children	Number of work interruptions				
	None	One	Two	Three	Four or more
Total	42.1	42.0	12.1	3.1	0.7
No children	77.5	18.9	2.8	0.7	0.1
1 child	43.7	40.7	13.6	1.9	0.1
2 children	24.1	54.5	16.5	4.5	0.4
3 children	20.8	55.6	17.2	4.4	2.0
4 or more children	20.5	55.4	16.9	5.6	1.7

Source:

Statistics Canada, 1984 Family History Survey, unpublished data, population estimates.

Table 13. Percentage Distribution of Women Who Had Work Interruptions of at Least One Year by Reason for Interruption, Canada, 1984

Reason for interruption	First interruption	Second interruption
Total	100.0	100.0
Pregnancy/child care	43.4	36.4
Return to school	4.7	1.9
Retired	1.6	3.4
Moved with husband or partner	7.2	8.8
Laid-off/job ended	8.4	19.2
Own illness	5.8	10.2
Marriage	16.2	2.5
Other	9.6	14.3
Not stated	0.9	2.1
Other reasons	2.2	1.2

Source:

Statistics Canada, 1984, Family History Survey, unpublished data, population estimates.

The Labour Force Survey also provides data on why the unemployed left their last job. For most women and men, the main reason for unemployment is job loss. Over half of the women looking for employment in 1986 lost their job or were laid off. Women (8.1%) are more likely than men (0.9%) to report "personal responsibilities" as a reason for leaving a job, reflecting their greater responsibilities for domestic work or child care. Approximately one-fifth of unemployed women were re-entrants into the labour force according to Labour Force Survey data, which show that 22% of unemployed women reported their activity before looking for employment as "keeping house".

Considerable interest has been shown in the extent to which women leave the labour force for extended periods of time. The 1984 Family History Survey examined work interruptions of one year or more. Population estimates from the survey show that 86.2% of women have been regularly employed. Of these women, 42.1% have had no interruptions of one year or more and 42.0% have had one such interruption (Table 12). Only 15.9% had two or more interruptions. The evidence does not support the idea that women enter and leave the labour force frequently. They tend to either stay in the labour force, take one extended leave and return, or leave permanently.

The reasons for work interruptions are given in Table 13. Pregnancy/child care was the main reason for both first and second interruptions. In the second interruption, job loss became the next most important reason. The reasons varied somewhat by age, with more women over 55 giving marriage rather than pregnancy/child care as the reason for the first interruption.

In terms of age, education level and number of children, younger women, women with fewer than two children and women with post-secondary education were less likely to have had an interruption than were other women.

How long do women remain out of the labour force when they have interruptions? The 1984 Family History Survey found that among women with one or more interruptions of more than a year, the first interruption lasted less than two years for 15.3% of the women, two to nine years for 31.9%, and ten to nineteen years for 3.3% of them. Interruptions of less than two years were more common among younger women than older women. A further 36.3% of women had not worked since their labour force participation was first interrupted. This varied by age, with 46% of women aged 55-64 not having worked outside the home since their first interruption,

compared with only 26% of women aged 35-44. Variation in duration also existed by education. Women with more education were more likely to have a first interruption of less than 10 years and less likely to stop work permanently than less educated women. The findings on frequency and duration of interruptions from the Family History Survey mirror the trends in participation rates. As women become more educated and have fewer children, voluntary interruptions of paid work are decreasing. Younger women will have more of a lifetime commitment to paid work than did the women of their parents' generation.

Some women never join the labour force. Population estimates from the Family History Survey show that 13.2% of women never had regular paid employment. This figure increases with age, from 6.5% of women 25-34 years of age to 23.9% of women aged 65. The percentage who never worked generally decreased as education increased, with 25.3% of women with one to eight years of schooling never having worked outside the home compared with only 4.8% of women with university degrees. The Family History Survey shows some variation in whether women ever worked by the number of children, with 21% of women with four or more children never having worked outside the home compared with 7.8% of women with two children. In summary, except for teenagers, the women who had never worked regularly outside the home tended to be older, had less education, and had more children.

The 1986 Census found that 1.7 million women with children at home (39%) were not in the labour force (Table 14). Of these women only 19% had never worked outside the home. The majority of these women (56.6%) were 45 years or over. Overall, 92.5% of all women with children at home have been in the labour force at some time. The number of children living at home did not seem to influence the percentage of women who had never worked, unless there were four or more children. This is consistent with the pattern of labour force participation noted earlier, that is, women's participation stays strong until they have four or more children.

Another kind of unpaid work in which many Canadian women engage consists of unpaid work in a family business. According to the 1986 Census, unpaid family workers in Canada totalled 87,675, of whom 75% were women. Unpaid family work was more common in rural areas than in urban areas. Overall, 1.3% of all employed women and 2% of employed married women in Canada reported they were unpaid family workers. In rural areas the rate for employed married women rose to 5.6%.

Table 14. Female Population 15 Years of Age and Over Not in the Labour Force, With Children at Home, by Age and by Number of Children at Home

Age group	Number not in labour force	Number not in labour force, never worked	% of those not in labour force who have never worked	Never worked
Total	1,727,105	326,955	18.9	100.0
15-19	10,580	4,645	43.9	1.4
20-24	99,315	18,565	18.7	5.7
25-34	509,405	54,025	10.6	16.5
35-44	439,270	64,535	14.7	19.7
45-54	307,225	71,730	23.4	21.9
55-64	232,795	67,540	29.0	20.7
65 +	128,520	45,920	35.7	14.0

Number of children at home	Population	Number not in labour force	Number not in labour force, never worked	% of population who never worked	% of those not in labour force who have never worked
Total	4,384,890	1,727,105	326,955	7.5	18.9
1	1,677,410	670,000	141,950	8.5	21.2
2	1,784,725	652,415	102,445	5.7	15.7
3	685,530	286,655	51,845	7.6	18.1
4 or more	237,220	118,025	30,715	13.0	26.0

Source:
1986 Census of Canada, unpublished data.

CONCLUSION

Labour force participation is becoming a constant part of more and more women's lives. Women enter the labour force for many reasons but mainly to support themselves and their families. Women without husbands or partners have always had to support themselves and in some cases their children. Today many households need two or more income earners, thus married women have entered the labour force in increasing numbers. Well over half of all women with children living at home, including large numbers of women with pre-school children, were in the labour force. About 34% of married women (including those in common-law relationships) in the labour force in the 1986 Census had husbands or partners who had an income of less than \$20,000 and 60% had husbands or partners who had an income of less than \$30,000.

While men in the labour force do a variety of jobs, women are still concentrated in a few occupations. The concentration of women in the traditionally "female" jobs of clerical, sales and service occupations, where pay is low and opportunities are few, has increased over the last 15 years. In 1986, the top occupations for women were still those of secretaries, bookkeepers and salespersons. Women's share of management jobs had increased by 1986 but they were still significantly underrepresented in management occupations in most industries. They made gains in many other male-dominated occupations but overall most of the occupations remained male dominated. Some occupations became more male dominated and several occupations became less female dominated, such as elementary school teachers, which is one of the better paying jobs for women. In certain occupations where the total number of employees decreased, women tended to lose a disproportionate number of jobs.

In 1985, full-year, full-time female workers earned on average 65.5% of what men earned. This is an improvement, since the ratio was 59.9% in 1970 and 63.8% in 1980. An examination of the data on occupation and income shows that the occupations with the largest increase in the number of women are those where the employment earnings are low.

Part-time work is mainly women's work. Many women worked part time because they could not find full-time work. Others worked part time because they had family responsibilities. Nearly two-thirds of single women working part time combined such work with the pursuit of education, while one-half of married women working part time did not want full-time work. Part-time workers generally have few benefits and little job security.

Most women have been in the labour force at some time and many have combined household work and employment. But not all women can find jobs when they need them. In 1986, many women were seeking paid work and were unable to find it. Women had a higher unemployment rate than men but their main reason for unemployment was the same as men's, that is, job loss. Some women have never worked for pay. Except for teenagers, these women tend to be older, with less education and more children. It is becoming far less common for women with and without children to have never worked in the labour force. Besides unpaid household work, some women do unpaid work in family businesses. But only a small percentage of women reported themselves as unpaid family workers and most of these lived in rural areas.

Women today have a strong commitment to the labour force. This commitment, like men's, is based on the need to support themselves and their families and can therefore be expected to remain strong in the future.

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